

# GERMANY THE NEXT REPUBLIC?

BY CARL W. ACKERMAN

"President Wilson was at the end of his patience. Probably he began to doubt whether he could rely upon the reports of Ambassador Gerard that there was a chance of the democratic forces in Germany coming out ahead of the military caste. Wilson showed his attitude plainly in the Sussex note."

**That All Was Not Well With the Organization of the German Government Was Made Manifest to Ackerman Early in His Experiences—His Difficulties With the Von Holtzendorff Interview Proved Enlightening**

**The Chief Effect of the Sussex Note in Germany Was That It Forced the Kaiser to Choose Between the Conciliatory Policy of Von Bethmann-Hollweg and the Unrelenting U-Boat Campaign Backed by the Navy**

### The Sussex Note Is Received in Germany

ON THE eighteenth of April I asked Admiral von Holtzendorff, Chief of the Admiralty Staff, for his opinion about the Sussex. Two days later he approved the interview, in which I quote him as saying:

We did not sink the Sussex. I am as convinced of that as of anything which has happened in this war. If you read the definite instructions, the exact orders each submarine commander has, you would understand that the torpedoing of the Sussex was impossible. Many of our submarines have returned from rounding up British vessels. They sighted scores of passenger ships going between England and America, but not one of these was touched.

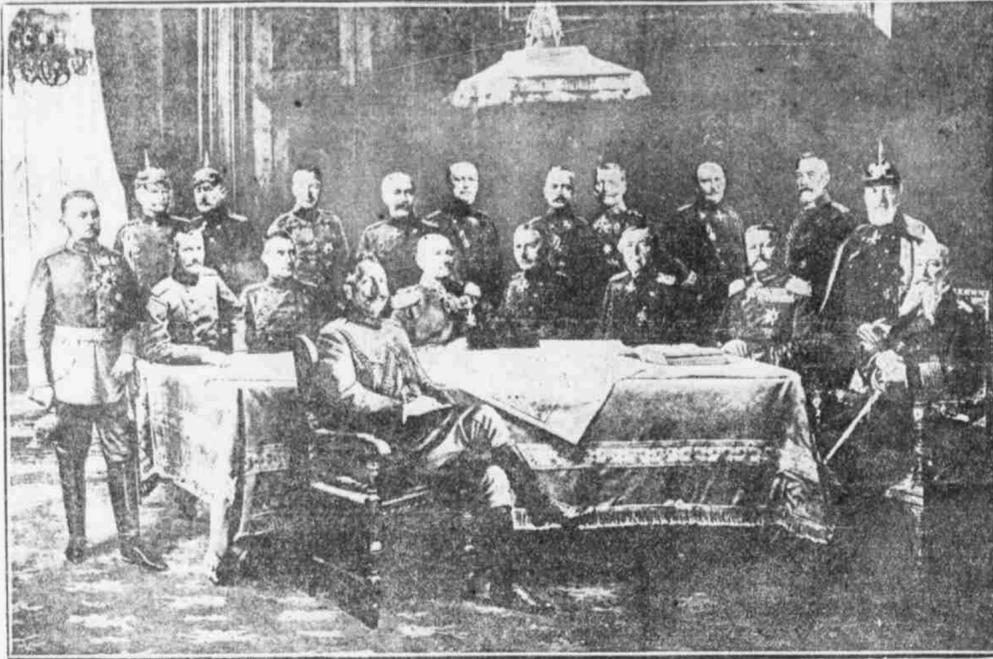
We have definitely agreed to warn the crews and passengers of passenger liners. We have lived up to that promise in every way. We are not out to torpedo without warning neutral ships bound for England. Our submarines have respected every one of them so far, and they have met scores in the North Sea, the Channel and the Atlantic.

On the same day that Ambassador Gerard handed Von Jagow Secretary Lansing's note Under Secretary of State Zimmermann approved the Von Holtzendorff interview. Zimmermann could not make himself believe that a German submarine was responsible and the Government had decided to disavow all responsibility. But such convincing reports began to arrive from the United States and from neutral countries which proved beyond a doubt that a German submarine was responsible, that the Government had to again bring up the submarine issue at great headquarters.

When the Von Holtzendorff interview was published in the United States it caused a sensation, because if Germany maintained the attitude which the Chief of the Admiralty Staff had taken with the approval of the Foreign Office, a break in diplomatic relations could not be avoided. Secretary Lansing telegraphed Ambassador Gerard to inquire at the Foreign Office whether the statements of Von Holtzendorff represented the opinions of the German Government. Gerard called me to the Embassy, but before I arrived Doctor Heckscher, of the Reichstag Foreign Relations Committee, came. Gerard called me in Heckscher's presence to ask me if I knew that the Von Holtzendorff interview would bring about a break in diplomatic relations unless it was immediately disavowed. He told Doctor Heckscher to inform Zimmermann that if the Chief of the Admiralty Staff was going to direct Germany's foreign policies he would ask his Government to accredit him to the naval authorities and not to the Foreign Office. Heckscher would not believe my statement that Zimmermann had approved the interview, and assured Gerard that within a very short time the Foreign Office would disavow Von Holtzendorff's statements.

When he arrived at the Foreign Office, however, Zimmermann not only refused to disavow the Admiral's statement, but informed Heckscher that he had the same opinions.

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Ambassador Gerard that there was a chance of the democratic forces in Germany coming out ahead of the military caste. Wilson showed his attitude plainly in the Sussex note when he said:

"The Government of the United States has been very patient. At every stage of this distressing experience of tragedy after tragedy it has sought to be governed by the most thoughtful considerations of the extraordinary circumstances of an unprecedented war and to be guided by sentiments of very genuine friendship for the people and the Government of Germany. It has accepted the successive explanations and assurances of the Imperial Government as of course given in entire sincerity and good faith, and has hoped even against hope that it would prove to be possible for the Imperial Government to see to order and control the acts of its naval commanders as to square its policy with the recognized principles of humanity as embodied in the law of nations. It has made every allowance for unprecedented conditions and has been willing to wait until the facts became unmistakable and were susceptible of only one interpretation. It now sees it to a just regard for its own rights to say to the Imperial Government that that time has come. It has become painfully evident to it that the position which it took at the very outset is inevitable; namely, that the use of submarines for the destruction of enemy commerce is of necessity, because of the very character of the vessels employed and the very methods of attack which their employment of course involves, utterly incompatible with the principles of humanity, the long-established and incontrovertible rights of neutrals and the sacred immunities of non-combatants.

"If it is still the purpose of the Imperial Government to prosecute relentless and indiscriminate warfare against vessels of com-

merce by the use of submarines without regard to what the Government of the United States must consider the sacred and indisputable rules of international law and the universally recognized dictates of humanity, the Government of the United States is at last forced to the conclusion that there is but one course it can pursue. Unless the Imperial Government should now immediately declare and effect an abandonment of its present methods of submarine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, the Government of the United States can have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German Government altogether.

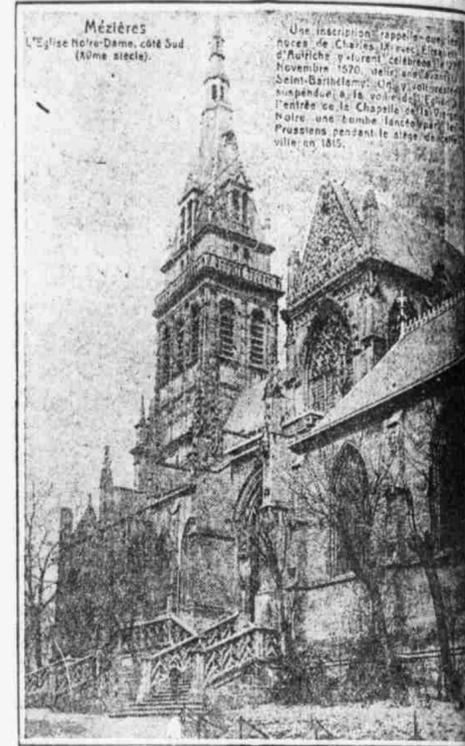
"This action the Government of the United States contemplates with the greatest reluctance, but feels constrained to take in behalf of humanity and the right of neutral nations."

After Von Jagow read the note the Foreign Office Telegraph Bureau sent it to great headquarters, which at this time was still located in Charleville, France, for the information of the Kaiser and General von Falkenhayn. It was evident to every one in Berlin that again not only the submarine issue was to be debated at great headquarters, but that the Kaiser was to be forced again to decide between the Chancellor and his democratic supporters and Von Falkenhayn and the military party. Before the conference convened general headquarters sent inquiries to five Government departments, the Foreign Office, the Navy, the Ministry of War, the Treasury and Interior. The Ministers at the head of these departments were asked to state whether in their opinion the controversy with America should be adjusted or whether the submarine warfare should be continued. Dr. Karl Helfferich, the Vice Chancellor and Minister of Interior; Secretary of State von Jagow and Count von Roedern, Minister of Finance, replied to

adjust the difficulty. The army and navy said in effect: "If you can adjust it without stopping the submarine warfare and without breaking with the United States, do so."

### Kaiser Wilhelm Calls a Conference

The latter part of April the Kaiser summoned all of his Ministers and his leading generals to the French chateau which he used as his headquarters in Charleville. This city is one of the most picturesque cities in the occupied districts of northern France. It is located on the banks of the Meuse and contains many historical old ruins. At one end of the town is a large stone castle surrounded by a moat. This was made the headquarters of the General Staff after the Germans invaded this section of France. Near the railroad station there was a public park. Facing it was a French chateau, a beautiful, comfortable home. This was the Kaiser's residence. All streets leading in this direction were barricaded and guarded by sentries. No one could pass without a special written permit from the chief of the General Staff. Von Falkenhayn had his home nearby in another of the beautiful chateaux there. The chief of every department of the General Staff lived



The church near the Kaiser's headquarters in a chateau at Charleville in princely fashion in houses which in peace times were homes for distinguished Frenchmen. There were left in Charleville scarcely a hundred French citizens, because, obviously, French people, who were enemies of Germany, could not be permitted to go back and forth in the city which was the center of German militarism. (CONTINUED TOMORROW)

## PHILADELPHIA'S FIRST QUOTA FOR THE NATIONAL ARMY DEPARTS FOR TRAINING AT CAMP MEADE



TEARFUL SCENES ATTEND LEAVE-TAKING IN TRAINSHED OF BALTIMORE AND OHIO STATION, TWENTY-FOURTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS, AS RELATIVES OF DRAFTED MEN BID ADIEU TO INITIAL CONTINGENT BOUND FOR TRAINING QUARTERS.